

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 03890 151554Z

17

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

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R 151514Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9237

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

EUCOM

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

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EO 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: THE ATTACK ON DEMIREL: FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

REF: ANKARA 3773

BEGIN SUMMARY: BODILY ATTACK ON PRIMIN DEMIREL MAY 13 (REFTEL) HAS PRODUCED POLITICAL REACTION WHICH COULD LEAD TO INCREASED TENSION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION PARTIES. DEATH PENALTY WAS REQUESTED FOR DEMIREL ASSAILANT, BUT STATE SECURITY COURT HAS DECLINED JURISDICTION. ASSAILANT ADMITTED MEMBERSHIP IN OUTLAWED TURKISH PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIMIN DEMIREL'S ASSAILANT, VURAL ONSEL, WAS CHARGED MAY 14 WITH PARTICIPATING IN AN ORGANIZED ATTEMPT TO TOPPLE THE REGIME BY FORCE (ARTICLE 146/1 OF THE PENAL CODE) AND THE DEATH PENALTY WAS REQUESTED BY THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR. HOWEVER, THE STATE

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PAGE 02 ANKARA 03890 151554Z

SECURITY COURT (SSC) DECLINED TO ACCEPT JURISDICTION SINCE THE

ACT OCCURRED IN A MARTIAL LAW PROVINCE AND REFERRED THE CASE TO THE ANKARA MARTIAL LAW TRIBUNAL (WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT ACCEPT JURISDICTION). THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR HAS APPEALED THE SSC'S DECISION NOT TO TAKE JURISDICTION TO THE COURT OF CASSATION.

2. ONSEL TESTIFIED AT HIS HEARING THAT HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE ILLEGAL TURKISH PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT (TPLF), THAT THE ACTION HAD BEEN PLANNED BY HIS ORGANIZATION AND WAS CARRIED OUT FOR THE IDEOLOGICAL AIM OF SHOWING THAT REVOLUTIONARY ACTION WAS POSSIBLE. (THE PRESS HAS REPORTED ADDITIONALLY THAT ONSEL HAS A HISTORY OF MENTAL INSTABILITY AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION.)

3. THE ASSAULT HAS LED TO A BEWILDERING ARRAY OF CHARGES AND COUNTERCHARGES BY POLITICAL LEADERS AND THE PRESS WHICH REFLECT THE BITTER POLITICAL DIVISIONS NOW BESETTING TURKEY. ALTHOUGH DEMIREL HAS REMAINED ABOVE THE FRAY AND URGED THE NATION TO REMAIN CALM, PARTY STATEMENTS HAVE BECOME AGGRESSIVELY PARTISAN:

A. MINISTER OF STATE (JUSTICE PARTY (JP)) OZTURK STATED AT PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 13 THAT THE INCIDENT WAS A "CONSPIRACY" PERPETRATED BY A REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) YOUTH BRANCH ANARCHIST. (ONSEL WAS CARRYING AN CARD ADMITTING HIM TO AN RPP SEMINAR.) OZTURK WAS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT PROFESSORS MUAMMER AKSOY AND UGUR ALACAKAPTAN WERE LECTURERS AT THESE SEMINARS. (THAT EVENING DYNAMITE WAS DETONATED AT THE HOUSES OF AKSOY AND ALACAKAPTAN.)

B. THE JP GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD RELEASED A STATEMENT MAY 14 WHICH SAID IN PART "IT IS OBSERVED THAT CERTAIN TRAITORS AND ENEMIES OF THE STATE ARE SET LOOSE ON THE COMMUNITY AFTER THEY HAVE BEEN TRAINED AND BRAINWASHED IN CERTAIN SEMINARS ... IT MUST BE NOTED THAT A REGISTERED CRIMINAL, WHO DOES NOT HIDE HIS TPLA MEMBERSHIP ... MUST SEEK AND FIND ON RPP PREMISES THE TRAINING AND EDUCATION HE FEELS HE LACKS."

C. RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVIT EXPRESSED HIS DISMAY OVER THE INCIDENT ON MAY 13 AND STATED THAT THE RPP "HAD ALWAYS BEEN AGAINST VIOLENCE AND BRUTE FORCE." THE RPP CENTRAL EXECUTIVE

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PAGE 03 ANKARA 03890 151554Z

BOARD STATEMENT, RELEASED MAY 14, ANNOUNCED ITS DISAPPROVAL OF THE POLITICAL EXPLOITATION OF THE EVENT BY THE GOVERNMENT AND REFERRED TO OZTURK'S STATEMENTS AND THE SUBSEQUENT EXPLOSIONS AT THE AKSOY AND ALACAKAPTAN RESIDENCES AND DEMANDED AN APOLOGY FROM THE GOVERNMENT FOR HAVING MADE "UNJUST AND UNFOUNDED ALLEGATIONS AND DANGEROUS PROVOCATIONS." THE RPP REBUTTAL STRESSED THAT THE ASSAULT WAS THE WORK OF A "LUNATIC."

4. EDITORIAL REACTION UNIFORMLY CONDEMNED THE ATTACK AND
EXPRESSED CONDOLENCES TO DEMIREL. BEYOND THAT POINT, HOWEVER,
IDEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS PREDOMINATE: THE PRO-GOVERNMENT
MAY 14 PRESS STRESSED THE THEME THAT ONSEL WAS AN RPP YOUTH
BRANCH MEMBER AND WARNED AGAINST THE COMMUNIST THREAT. THE MAY 15
SON HAVADIS STATES THAT THE SAME PEOPLE WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE ATTACK ON DEMIREL DYNAMITED THE PROFESSORS' HOMES.
TERCUMAN FOUND A "MORAL TIE" BETWEEN AN ECEVIT SPEECH AND
ONSEL'S ACTION. THE MAY 15 LIBERAL-LEFT PRESS FEATURES CRITICISMS
OF OZTURK FOR ACTING IN AN "UNSTATESMANLIKE" MANNER AND RAISES
THE SECURITY QUESTION OF HOW A "SOCIAL LUNATIC" COULD BE ALLOWED
TO MIX WITH REPORTERS OUTSIDE THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE.
(INTERESTINGLY, SEVERAL PAPERS SHOW EARLIER PHOTOGRAPHS OF
ONSEL WITH ECEVIT AND WITH DEMIREL.) MAY 15 SOCIALIST YENI
ORTAM ARTICLE DISMISSES THE ACTION AS WORK OF A LUNATIC BUT
WONDERS WHAT EXCUSE OZTURK HAD FOR MAKING HIS STATEMENTS.

5. COMMENT: REACTIONS TO THE INCIDENT BY POLITICAL LEADERS
AND THE PRESS SUGGEST THAT THE GOVERNMENT PARTIES INTEND TO
GET POLITICAL MILEAGE FROM THE ASSAULT, USING IT AS AN EXAMPLE
OF THE LEFTIST THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY (AND AT A MINIMUM,
TARRING THE RPP WITH GUILT BY ASSOCIATION). THE INCIDENT HAS
FURTHER STRAINED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE
OPPOSITION, BUT IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL IF IT MAY HAVE MORE
SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS.

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